

How to get the best from surveys

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Trusted evidence.
Informed decisions.
Better health.



I will cover...

- Setting the scene – why a survey?
- Principles for designing consumer survey
- The Cochrane consumer survey
- Distributing the survey
- Analysing the results
- Next steps
- Tips for designing and analysing surveys



Setting the scene – why a survey?

- Cochrane’s Strategy to 2020 to be superseded by post 2020 approach
- Developing a vision for consumer engagement/involvement in Cochrane post 2020
- Collaborative process involving representatives of all stakeholder groups
- Task Group formed with Terms of Reference
 - Data gathering (existing data plus two surveys – consumers and Cochrane groups)
 - Analysis
 - Discussion document
 - Fed into post 2020 strategy consultation
 - Basis of post 2020 consumer work programme

Principles for designing the survey

- Short as possible
- Reflect 2014 survey for comparison purposes
- Collect appropriate level of personal data (GDPR principles)
- In English
- Accessible
 - Who was responding?
 - What were their experiences of Cochrane
 - What were their future priorities
- Fixed choice questions and give opportunity to respond in own words
- Drafted, tested and revised with input from the Task Group



The consumer survey

- Estimated 15-30 minutes to complete
- Open from 29th October to 15th December 2019
- GDPR statement
- 15 questions
- Mix of drop down menus, multiple choice, free text questions
 - About the respondents
 - Experiencing Cochrane
 - Future priorities



The survey questions

About the respondents

- Q1 What is your country of residence? (drop down list)
- Q2 What is your age? (drop down list)
- Q3 What is your first language? (multiple choice - priority languages)

Experiencing Cochrane

- Q4 When thinking about your involvement with Cochrane, how would you identify yourself? (multiple choice)
- Q5 How did you find out about Cochrane? (multiple choice)
- Q6 Please tell us about your involvement with Cochrane (multiple choice)
- Q7 Please tell us why you became involved in Cochrane (multiple choice)
- Q8 Are you a member of the Cochrane Consumer Network? (Cochrane's global community of healthcare consumers) (multiple choice)

- Q9 How long have you been involved with Cochrane? (multiple choice)
- Q10 In which of the following ways have you volunteered with Cochrane in the past or would like to in the future? (multiple choice)
- Q11 What kind of Cochrane groups have you been involved with or would like to be in the future? (multiple choice)
- Q12 Your satisfaction with Cochrane (rating scale)
- Q13 Tell us what you think about the way that Cochrane engages with you and other healthcare consumers (free text)

Future priorities

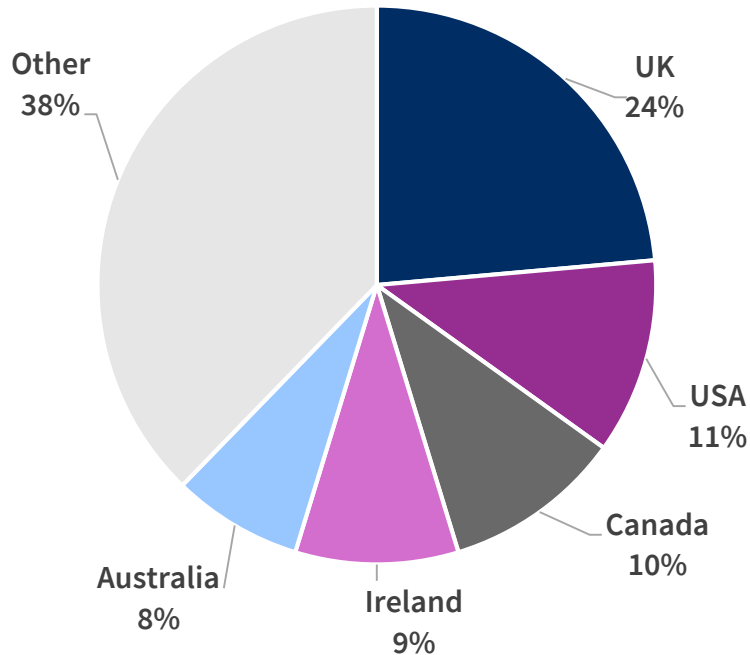
- Q15 Thinking about the things you told us in your previous answer, please suggest up to 3 specific things that you would like Cochrane to start, stop, or change (free text)

Distributing the survey

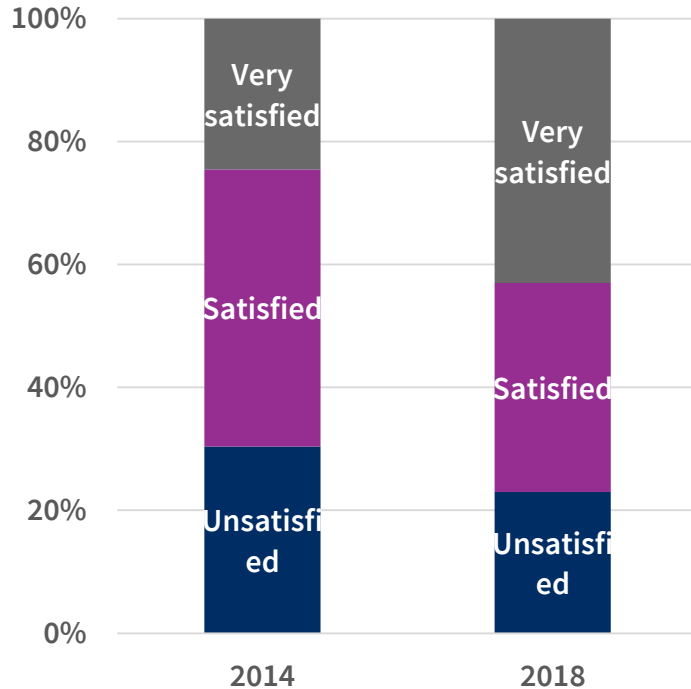
- SurveyMonkey generated link
- Direct mail to 1600 consumers, with reminder
- Cochrane community post
- Cochrane Consumer monthly news digest
- Social media (Twitter and Facebook)



Key survey results



- 106 responses from 1600 consumers (6.6%)
- 43% said they became involved with Cochrane in order to represent the consumer point of view in Cochrane



When asked how respondents had contributed in the past, the most common ways were:

- Promoting the work of Cochrane (56%),
- Taking part in Cochrane training (53%)
- Attending the Colloquium or other meeting (46%) and
- Peer reviewing (40%)

Priorities for the future / things to improve

- Lack of feedback when peer reviewing
- The need for additional training
- Complexity of Cochrane evidence
- The need for more translated evidence
- More opportunities for contributing
- Forums for discussion
- More face-to-face meetings
- Greater involvement in priority setting
- Clarity on conflicts of interest
- The need to reward consumers for their contribution
- More accessible information about involvement for consumers

“I am somewhat dissatisfied to both the extent to which patients are truly empowered within the organization and the ways current approaches to engagement reflect the lack of diverse involvement.”

“Always happy and proud to be a part of such a prestigious body of evidence.”

“I feel Cochrane needs to reach out to the consumers in more simple and innovative ways”

Next steps

- Analysis included in draft paper on post 2020 consumer vision
- Suggestions for future activities were added to Cochrane group survey and task group identified activities
- Duplicates combined and task group identified priority activities
- Organised within likely post 2020 strategy objectives and fed into strategy development process
- Discussion paper developed to form basis of action plan
- Results fed back to consumers in online meeting



Reflections

What worked well

- Short
- Good combination of multiple choice and free text
- Easy to distribute
- Good consistency with 2014 survey
- Synergy with other consultation and data collection processes

What could be improved

- Response rate
- Languages other than English (?)

Challenges

- Analysing free text responses



Tips for designing surveys

- **Write down the ‘headline’ answers** you want at the end e.g. 60% of people think newsletter is easy to understand. Use these to plan your questions.
- **Short is best.** After writing your questions, look at what you can delete.
- Use **simple and direct wording** with one theme/topic per question.
- Use a **mix** of multichoice / rating scales and a **FEW** questions asking for people’s own words. Remember you have to analyse the open responses.
- **Test** your survey with friends and colleagues. They will pick up issues you don’t see.
- Spend time on the wording of your **invitations** – ‘sell’ why people should do your survey, how it will be used and how long it will take.



Analysing surveys and other data

- Think about how you will analyse BEFORE you collect data. Involve your stakeholders - what do they want to find out? What ‘output’ do they want?
- Use **KT principles** to display e.g. short summaries, pictures, plain language.
- Use pictures, bar charts and pie charts to display numbers.
- Use quotes to bring information to life and show how strongly people feel about something.
- Consider picking out common themes using free ‘**word clouds**’ e.g. <https://www.wordclouds.com/> or <https://monkeylearn.com/word-cloud/>
- Categorise answers into ‘big picture’ themes that will influence decisions.
- Compare answers from different audience types, geographic areas etc.,

